

Issa Luna Pla

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- **Experienced academic researcher and educator** with over 20 years of university-level teaching. Dr. Luna-Pla combines expertise in law, communications, and public policy to design and deliver interdisciplinary courses on human rights, transparency, white-collar crime, corruption, and digital ethics—bridging theory with real-world application.
- **Proven leader in interdisciplinary research** and policy design, with a strong track record of building cross-sector collaborations and consensus to drive impactful, data-informed knowledge. Skilled in mentoring students, promoting civic engagement, and embedding social justice in curriculum development and academic practice.
- **Expertise in developing innovative analytical tools** to address complex criminal and corruption environments, leveraging data science to model and analyze systemic inequalities, threats, and asymmetries. A solid grounding in international law and human rights frameworks, with a focus on applying research to advance equitable access and transformative education.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Independent researcher

2024-Present

Senior Researcher

- Develop and implement analytical tools using data from Latin American countries to map and describe criminal and illicit networks.
- Conduct in-depth analyses of corruption and organized crime, providing data-driven insights to support litigation and inform international policy advocacy.
- Design risk assessment manuals for organizations and journalists operating in high-risk, crime-affected areas, helping to identify and support victims of corruption.

Columbia University, New York

2021-2024

Senior Research Scholar

- Focus on strategies for combating corruption and the impact of crime on economic and social development outcomes in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Identify renowned experts and professionals, and work with international organizations to establish a network for the application of data science to traditional development policy.
- Delivered ten major events partnering with institutions from Colombia, Chile, Argentina, Guatemala, and the U.S., attaining an international audience of over 1000.
- Edited and published contributions of 48 professionals using evidence-based methods to evaluate the impacts of corruption and crime.
- Analyzed procurement policy and public contracting in 80+ government agencies to identify risk measurements.

National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM)**2004-2024****Tenured Researcher, Legal Research Institute**

- Lead the Corruption and Impunity Observatory, overseeing interdisciplinary groups to share knowledge and input for decision-making of policies pertaining to anti-corruption and development issues.
- Delivered multidisciplinary courses, including international human rights, free speech, access to information, anticorruption indicators, integrity and compliance protocols, and the complexities of organized crime and illicit networks.
- Developed graduate-level online course on governance and anticorruption, which reached over 34,000 students over five years.
- Teaching experience spanning 18+ years across graduate and undergraduate levels, delivering courses on information rights, government data transparency, and anti-corruption strategies. Designed and taught programs for diverse stakeholders—including journalists, lawyers, compliance officers, and prosecutors—emphasizing applied, practice-oriented approaches.
- Authored 20 books in Spanish and over 80 peer-reviewed articles and chapters in both Spanish and English, published in leading academic journals and editorial volumes.
- Supervised more than 30 bachelor's, master's, and PhD students and served on over 80 dissertation committees, contributing to the academic and professional development of emerging scholars.
- Active university community member, providing policy advisory, founding interdisciplinary research groups, and participating in faculty evaluation and selection boards.

Academic Dean**2018-2021**

- Appointed by the University President to lead eight teams (a total of 90 faculty and administrative staff) to execute institutional reforms, including introducing new policy and governance regulations, developing data-based systems, websites, platforms, and record-keeping repositories.
- Designed the creation of online learning and education outlets for multiple and interdisciplinary registrations. Reported to the University President directly and supervised the design of indicators to measure impact, productivity, results, and outcomes based on user satisfaction.
- Leveraged technology platforms to expand academic impact, generating over 12 million online publication views; organized and delivered more than 100 seminars and conferences annually; and published multiple peer-reviewed books and articles in print.
- Supervised the Doctoral Program of Law with 10 Ph.D. students annually, overseeing academic activities, editorial content, and integrating a postgraduate syllabus.
- Drove an 80% increase in annual website traffic, strengthening transparency for faculty, high schools, and professional centers, while extending outreach to museums and cultural institutions. Coordinated with 70+ Mexican campuses and international offices to standardize rules and criteria, enhancing governance practices across UNAM.

EDUCATION**Ibero-American University of Mexico, B.A. in Communication Studies (1996-2000).****Oxford University, Program of Comparative Media Law & Policy, 2000, and Visiting Fellow (2001).****The University of the West, PhD. in Information Law (2004).**

The London School of Economics & Political Sciences, MsS in Human Rights (2005-2006).

University of Texas at Austin, Visiting Professor (2018).

University of Essex Training Institution, Mathematics for Social Scientists Summer Program on Science Data Analysis, U.K. (2017).

Applied Mathematics Institute, UNAM, Network Analysis for Social Sciences Spring Course (2018).

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- **Prosecution of complex criminal networks: a multilevel ERGMs approach to CICIG's judicial cases.** (2025) Pre-print available [link](#). (Waxenecker H., Luna-Pla, I. and Nicolás-Carlock J.R.).
- **Unmasking and Quantifying Power Structures: How Network Analysis Enhances Peace and State-Building Efforts.** (2024) Data and Policy Blog, Cambridge. [Link](#) (Luna-Pla I.).
- **Network Analysis in Peace and State Building: Revealing Power Elites.** (2024). Data and Policy, Cambridge. DOI: [Link](#) (Luna Pla I.).
- **Organized Crime Behavior of Shell-Company Networks in Procurement: Prevention Insights for Policy and Reform.** (2023). Trends in Organized Crime, Springer. DOI: [Link](#) (Nicolás-Carlock J.R., Luna-Pla I.).
- **Complex network analysis applied to crime and corruption groups: introduction and perspective** (*El análisis de redes complejas aplicado a grupos de crimen y corrupción: introducción y perspectiva*). (Complex Network Analysis Applied to Crime and Corruption Groups: Introduction and Perspective) (2022). Política Criminal. Centro de Estudios de Derecho Penal. Telca Universidad Chile. DOI: [Link](#) (Luna-Pla I.).
- **Conspiracy of Corporate Networks in Corruption Scandals.** (2021). Frontiers in Physics. Social Physics 9:667471. DOI: [Link](#) (Nicolás-Carlock J.R., Luna-Pla I.).
- **Corruption and Complexity: A Scientific Framework for the Analysis of Corruption Networks.** (2020). Applied Network Science 5 13, Springer Open. DOI: [Link](#) (Luna-Pla I., Nicolás-Carlock J.R.).
- **Informational Poverty and the Right of Access to Public Information: A Capabilities Problem** (*Pobreza informacional y el derecho de acceso a la información pública. Un problema de capacidades*) (2012) in Jornal: Transparencia y Privacidad. Revista Mexicana de Acceso a la Información y Protección de Datos. No. 2. [Link](#) (Luna-Pla I.).
- **Pro-Human Development Empowerment Through Public Information** (*Empoderamiento pro-desarrollo humano con información pública*). (2013). Journal: Derecho Comparado de la Información, Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas, UNAM. No. 21, January-June, pp. 69-100. Available at the [link](#). (Luna-Pla I.).
- **Consumers' Rights and Advertising: Introduction and Case Studies** (*Derecho de los consumidores y la publicidad. Introducción y casos prácticos*). (2016). Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas, UNAM – Editorial Porrúa. (Luna-Pla I.).
- **Movement for the Right of Access to Information in Mexico** (*Movimiento por el derecho de acceso a la información en México*) (2009). Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas, UNAM, México. (Luna-Pla I.).

CONSULTANCIES

Special Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, International Consultant (Washington DC, US, 2004, 2008- 2012, 2019)

- Provided insights and contextual analysis for the protection of the right to access information for the Rapporteurship publications and contributed to the development of the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression 2020.

Organization of American States (OAS), International Consultant (Washington, DC, US, 2009-2010)

- Developed the Inter-American Model Law on Access to Public Information, discussed by 10 international experts of the Inter-American Juridical Committee and approved by the General Assembly of the Organization of American States.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Advisor (Oslo, Norway, 2018)

- Worked with 132 UN Member States, which adopted Access to Information policies after partnering with a group of experts to formulate an international mainstream strategy. Focused on the progressive realization of human rights and best practices across the UN Member States.

Internet Association of Mexico, Advisor (Mexico City, Mexico, 2020-2022)

- Reached 90 leading businesses and platforms affiliated with the Internet Association of Mexico during 2021-22 by selecting and supervising a multidisciplinary group of experts; conducted interviews to produce a study which offered policy recommendations on content. Used the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) as a guide; the study sparked debate across mainstream platforms and among legislators.
- Developed a toolkit following consultations with 20 international experts and commented by 10% of representatives in the Mexican Senate; various forums for internet industry professionals and legislators to evaluate policy recommendations on the liability of internet platforms based on guidance from USMCA.

Transparency and Access to Information Committee UNAM, Advisor (Mexico City, Mexico, 2016-2018)

- Championed a 150% boost in information requests by devising and integrating a transparency compliance strategy, introducing procedures and accountability rules to create transparency portals in six national political parties.
- Resolved 500-plus cases annually after reviewing access to information requests, complaints, classified information, and internal procedures, allowing for the development of confidential reasoning criteria, record-keeping rules, and legal compliance guidelines under the auspices of the president of UNAM.

National Institute of Transparency, Access to Information and Protection of Personal Data (INAI), Policy Consultant (Mexico City, Mexico, 2016-2022)

- Spurred 100% increase in requests for access to information after developing measurable impact indicators and overseeing successful implementation, resulting in improved cooperation between government agencies and transparency bodies and a complete transformation of existing practices.
- Facilitated 80% compliance by national transparency oversight bodies with an impact in 32 state governments and increased over 8 million hits on the transparency website by leading a panel of multi-disciplinary specialists designing two editions of Mexico's National Transparency and Data Protection Policy, including data-based assessments from 2016 to 2022.

Executive Secretariat of the National Anticorruption System, Policy Consultant, (Mexico City, Mexico, 2018-2019)

- Generated by steering a group of interdisciplinary authorities to develop a methodology furnishing input to national and local anti-corruption organizations, enabled the drafting and approval of a national and state-level policy, coordinated actions across government agencies, and introduced new practices in government.

- Enabled policy adoption in 32 state governments after creating a 2018-2019 strategy for the executive secretariat to identify priorities in anti-corruption occurrences for the Mexican government based on a citizen-centric approach to determine the governmental perception of corruption, to create practical solutions after conducting 19,000 individual surveys, with 618 social group representatives and analyzing 118 information sources.

National Electoral Institute, Committee Commissioner (Mexico City, Mexico, 2013-2015)

- Delivered 32 state guidelines and the National Congress media consent and release format for the minors appearing in political advertising by guiding a group of business professionals and consulting with eight national political parties in the Mexican National Electoral Commission to write internal policies and rules for the protection of children's rights in political and advertising campaigns for the 2017 application to mainstream media and social media platforms.
- Settled 80 cases annually as commission president and a member of the Transparency and Access to Information Committee, preparing confidential records classification and advancing disclosure policies, data protection, and internal rules for record-keeping for the National Electoral Commission between 2013 and 2015.

National Council for Congressional Television, Advisor (Mexico City, Mexico, 2012-2014)

- Increased media coverage by 100% in 10 major cities across Mexico, including producing 200+ shows, redesigning the legal framework, and governance regulations of the television channel. Work included evaluating policy content; providing recommendations/opinions to the channel's board; and redirecting its mission within both chambers of the Council for the Congressional TV and the National Congress in Mexico City.

Federal Attorney for Consumer Protection, Federal Government of Mexico, Advisor (Mexico City, Mexico, 2012-2015)

- Designed benchmarks to include several consumer complaints, creating a database that organized approximately 53,780 grievances.
- Sought to protect consumers' rights through collaboration with the Federal Consumer Prosecutor, including evaluation of complaints, policy oversight, and rulemaking for standards to ensure compliance and adoption of guidelines.
- Enhanced consumer websites by establishing a panel of experts to target transparency policies and increase consumer access to information about government products and services, including gas, telecommunications, electricity, and food.

LANGUAGES

English (Fluent)

Spanish (Native)